

## **UIAA Standards for Voluntary Leaders and Instructors**

Guidance notes for Member Associations' training and assessment schemes

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# Introduction

## Background

The UIAA Mountaineering Commission developed Model Training Standards for Voluntary Leaders and Instructors in response to requests from Member Associations for guidance on widely accepted good practice and standards for training schemes. These were adopted by the General Assembly in 1993 (Santiago de Chile) and the Mountaineering Commission formed a Training Standards Working Group (TSWG) to assist Member Associations wishing to use the original four standards. In 2001 and 2003 the TSWG held seminars (Le Tour, France) to discuss the use and application of the standards. 39 standards were approved between 1993 and 2005,

## Developments in 2005

After a period of over 10 years successful use of the standards, a third TSWG seminar was held in June 2005 (Steingletscher, Switzerland). This seminar reviewed the content and structure of the existing standards and discussed the need for modifications and additional standards. The seminar noted that:

- The needs and circumstances of Member Associations can be very different around the world.
- The expertise in national training requirements is in the Member Associations.
- The TSWG provides a very valuable service to national federations by evaluating their training schemes and verifying these meet common international standards.

Hence, in order to better accommodate to the needs of Member Associations the seminar proposed to build on the success of the four original standards by:

- a) Creating a flexible framework for activities that could better accommodate the different needs and circumstances of federations around the world.
- b) Place greater emphasis on the process for evaluating the scheme and the work between the TSWG Expert and the Member Association.

The above proposal represented a shift in emphasis away from the concept of uniform technical standards for the candidates being trained by the Member Associations, and towards the quality of the process by which the candidates are trained and assessed. The proposals from the seminar were further refined by the TSWG and the Mountaineering Commission, and were adopted as the new basis for evaluating training schemes from October 2006.

The TSWG welcomes comments on the Training Standards, and will revise them from time to time.

## Scope

Member Associations have total discretion to use or not use the Training Standards in their own country. There is no UIAA requirement to make use of the Standards or the evaluation offered by the TSWG. Member Associations alone have the responsibility for training and assessing their national leaders and instructors. The Member Associations also have the responsibility to ensure that requirements are met for relevant national legislation and insurance.

The use of the UIAA Training Standards is a means by which Member Associations can demonstrate their training and assessment schemes have been independently evaluated and meet accepted standards. The use of the standards also allows opportunities for mutual recognition of qualifications between Member Associations.

The TSWG has developed the Training Standards specifically with the needs in mind of Member Associations and their leaders and instructors working in a voluntary capacity with other members of their federation. However, Member Associations may wish to apply the Standards in wider circumstances (e.g. for leaders and instructors who are paid, and who might be working with the public). Where this is the case, the Member Association concerned is responsible for ensuring their scheme meets the applicable standards in their country for the wider application of the UIAA Training Standards.

In the context of the UIAA Training Standards the following definitions apply:

**A leader** is a person who can take responsibility for other people and lead or supervise an activity.

**An instructor** is a person who can teach people including beginners so they are competent to take part in an activity.

### **Application and Evaluation**

Member Associations wishing to apply for a UIAA Training Standard should contact the President of the TSWG (who is contactable via the UIAA office). The TSWG will appoint an Expert to work with the Member Association and evaluate the proposed Scheme. The expert will:

- a) Evaluate the scheme that has been proposed in relation to the relevant UIAA Training Standard.

And where appropriate:

- b) Help the Member Association improve their scheme and meet the UIAA Training Standard.
- c) Produce a report and make a recommendation to the UIAA Mountaineering Commission.

The process of the Member Association working with the TSWG and the Expert is the most important and valuable aspect of the UIAA Training Standard.

## **A. General Requirements**

### **1. Evaluation**

#### **Documentation**

The first step is for the Member Association to submit a dossier with all the relevant information and documentation about the scheme that they wish to be evaluated. This will then be reviewed by the TSWG, and an Expert will be appointed to work with the Member Association to carry out the evaluation.

The dossier should contain an outline of the training scheme that is being submitted for approval. The scheme should contain a training course, an experience period, and an assessment course.

The proposed scheme can be for a leader or an instructor. If the scheme is for an instructor, the candidate must be assessed for their teaching skills.

The proposed scheme should include the following information:

- The purpose of the scheme.
- Description of the qualification.
- Definition of the qualification holder's role.

- Definition of the limits of the qualification.
- Candidates' pre-training requirements (this must include first aid).
- The skills and knowledge included in the training and the means by which they will be assessed (see requirements in section B and C).
- The requirements for on-going training of the qualification holder, and the revalidation of the qualification.

The qualification may be in different formats depending upon the circumstances and needs of the Member Association. The format of the qualification may be one or more of the following:

- Award
- Certificate
- Log book
- Licence

#### **Evaluation visit**

Once any points of clarification in the documentation have been dealt with, the Expert and Member Association will agree a visit (or visits) to evaluate the proposed scheme.

#### **Cost**

The costs of evaluation visits are the responsibility of the Member Association requesting approval, though the experts are often able to provide their time without charge. However, the UIAA has a modest development budget that may be available in some circumstances, and the UIAA is willing to assist in applications for development funding from other agencies.

#### **Evaluation categories**

The TSWG Expert will review whatever aspects he or she believes is relevant to the application made by the Member Association, but this will include:

- Member Association representation of Federation
- Adequate facilities
- Appropriate terrain
- Competent senior instructors
- Candidates with appropriate experience and skills, who are fit to be trained and assessed
- Programme design and management
- Training methods
- Assessment procedures
- Scheme review system
- Procedure for dealing with complaints and appeals

## **2. Common Basis**

The title 'UIAA Training Standard' indicates that a Member Association has a structured training and assessment scheme for voluntary leaders and/or, instructors that has been validated by independent examination by a UIAA Expert.

The designation of the title 'UIAA Training Standard' to a Member Association is an indication that the training and assessment scheme meets the relevant technical standards for the activity bearing in mind the needs of the federation and the environment and facilities in their country.

The designation is also an indication that the Federation's scheme is in accordance with other UIAA policies such as the *Environmental Guidelines and Objectives* and the *Summit Charter* (both available from the UIAA website). For example, the *Summit Charter* includes the UIAA's commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all people taking part in climbing and mountaineering. Therefore, training schemes are expected to demonstrate a positive attitude towards equal opportunities. (**Equality of access**)

### **3. Approval**

Once the Expert has completed the evaluation, he or she will submit a report to the TSWG. The President of the TSWG will inform the Member Association of the outcome of the evaluation, if they have been awarded the 'UIAA Training Standard', and if there are any special considerations or limitations that might apply.

The authorisation to use the term 'UIAA Training Standard' may only be applied by the Member Association to the specific scheme that has been evaluated. The authorisation may be withdrawn by the TSWG if it is concerned that the scheme no longer meets the relevant standard or the constitution of the Member Association has substantially changed, but normally the authorisation is valid for a period of 5 years and can be renewed. The UIAA reserves the right to review the articles of association of the Member Association within the 5 year period.

Once authorised the Member Association may use the UIAA logo and term 'UIAA Training Standard' on the documentation for the approved scheme and any certificates or identity cards held by the qualified persons. The certificate or identity card must clearly state the scope and limits of the qualification held, and the identity of the person holding the qualification.

## **B. Activity Standards**

The following set out the minimum specifications for pre-training experience, skills and knowledge that should be the content of the scheme being proposed for approval. Where appropriate the Activity Standards may be used in combination. If the proposed scheme includes activities at high-altitude, in tropical regions or avalanche terrain, it must be used in conjunction with the relevant Additional Standards.

### **1. Mountain Walking and Trekking (summer)**

This standard may include steep terrain, scrambling, and overcoming obstacles such as small rock steps and patches of snow or ice. This standard is not designed for use in situations that require the techniques of mountaineering to make progress, such as rock or ice climbing.

1.1 The scheme must define the type of terrain that it applies to, and the type of terrain that is outside the scope of the qualification.

1.2 The candidate should not be less than 18 years old at the time of assessment.

1.3 Pre training experience

The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number and type of mountain walks or treks, different areas and terrain, etc.).

1.4 Skills

The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:

1. Safe movement ascending, descending and traversing mountain terrain including:
  - Steep ground\*
  - 'Broken' or uneven terrain\*
  - Ridges\*
  - Gullies\*
  - Easy rock steps\*
  - Snow covered ground\*
2. Basic rope work\*
3. Route finding and navigation through typical and difficult terrain
4. Journey planning for groups
5. Organisation and group leadership
6. Camping and bivouacs
7. Avoiding and solving common problems
8. Emergency procedures
9. First aid

*\* If included in the scope of the scheme*

1.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Recognition and treatment of exhaustion, hypothermia, cold injury and heat disorders
2. Terrain and weather hazards
3. Journey planning, route choice, route grades, way marks and guidebooks
4. Camping and mountain huts
5. Nutrition
6. Physiology and injury prevention
7. Emergency procedures
8. Environment and mountain culture
9. Access
10. Legal liability and insurance
11. Training

## **2. Winter Mountain Walking and Snowshoeing**

This standard may be limited to low angle terrain or tracks that have very limited exposure to avalanche hazards or are in avalanche-controlled areas. However, if the scope of the scheme is to include travel in avalanche terrain it must be used in conjunction with the Avalanche standard. This standard is not

designed for use in situations that require the techniques of mountaineering to make progress, such as rock or ice climbing.

2.1 The scheme must define the type of terrain that it applies to, and the type of terrain that is outside the scope of the qualification.

2.2 The candidate should not be less than 18 years old at the time of assessment.

2.3 Pre training experience

The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number and type of mountain walks or treks, different areas and terrain, etc.).

2.4 Skills

The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:

1. Safe movement ascending, descending and traversing mountain terrain including:
  - Steep ground\*
  - 'Broken' or uneven terrain\*
  - Ridges\*
  - Gullies\*
  - Easy rock steps\*
2. Basic rope work\*
3. Route finding and navigation through typical and difficult terrain
4. Journey planning for groups
5. Organisation and group leadership
6. Camping and bivouacs
7. Avoiding and solving common problems
8. Emergency procedures
9. First aid

*\* If included in the scope of the scheme*

2.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Recognition and treatment of exhaustion, hypothermia, cold injury and heat disorders
2. Terrain and weather hazards
3. Avalanche hazard awareness
4. Journey planning, route choice, route grades, way marks and guidebooks
5. Camping and mountain huts
6. Nutrition
7. Physiology and injury prevention
8. Emergency procedures
9. Environment and mountain culture
10. Access
11. Legal liability and insurance
12. Training

### **3. Sport Climbing (i.e. single or multi-pitch fixed equipment)**

A sport climb is defined as being fully equipped with bolts for protection and belay anchors. This standard is only valid for climbing areas with easy approaches and descents (i.e. no navigation or mountaineering skills required).

3.1 The scheme must define if it is limited to single pitch climbs, multi pitch climbs and/or artificial climbing walls. .

3.2 The candidate should not be less than 18 years old at the time of assessment.

3.3 Pre training experience

- The candidate must have experience of on-sight leading grade 5 (UIAA).
- The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number of climbs, rock types, areas, etc.).

3.4 Skills

The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:

1. On-sight lead efficiently
2. Climbing movement skills
3. Bouldering
4. Basic coaching and teaching
5. Group management and leadership
6. Climbing calls
7. Rope management, knots, quick draws, belays and belaying
8. Abseiling
9. Emergency procedures
10. Avoiding and solving common problems
11. First aid

3.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Climbing equipment (e.g. footwear, belay devices and descenders, helmets, harness, ropes, slings, karabiners, etc.)
2. Care of equipment
3. Safety chains and fall factors
4. Types of bolts and anchors
5. Rock types
6. Ethics and tradition
7. Route choice, grades and use of guidebooks
8. Environment and access
9. Risk management, safety and emergency procedures
10. Nutrition
11. Physiology and injury prevention
12. Personal liability and insurance
13. Training
14. Competitions

## **4. Rock Climbing (with leader placed protection, and single or multi-pitch)**

This standard is only valid for climbing areas with easy approaches and descents (i.e. no navigation or mountaineering skills required) unless it is combined with the Mountain Walking and Trekking (summer) standard.

4.1 The scheme must define if it is for single pitch or multi pitch climbs.

4.2 The candidate should not be less than 18 years old at the time of assessment.

### 4.3 Pre training experience

- The candidate must have experience of on-sight leading 5 (UIAA).
- The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number of climbs, rock types, areas, etc.).

### 4.4 Skills

The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:

1. On-sight lead efficiently
2. Select and place protection equipment including multi-point anchors
3. Rope management, knots, running belays, and belaying
4. Single and double rope techniques
5. Route finding
6. Climbing movement skills
7. Bouldering
8. Basic coaching and teaching
9. Group management and leadership
10. Climbing calls
11. Abseiling
12. Emergency procedures
13. Avoiding and solving common problems
14. First aid

### 4.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Climbing equipment (e.g. footwear, belay devices and descenders, helmets, harness, ropes, slings, karabiners, protection equipment, etc.)
2. Care of equipment
3. Types of anchors (chocks, camming devices, bolts, etc.)
4. Dynamic safety system (e.g. impact forces, safety chain and fall factors).
5. Rock types
6. Ethics and tradition
7. Route choice, grades and use of guidebooks
8. Environment and access
9. Risk management, safety and emergency procedures
10. Nutrition
11. Physiology and injury prevention
12. Personal liability and insurance
13. Training

## 5. ICE CLIMBING

This standard is only valid for climbs with easy approaches and descents (i.e. no navigation skills required and minimal exposure to hazards). If the scope of the scheme is to include travel in avalanche terrain, it must be used in conjunction with the Avalanche standard.

5.1 The scheme must define if it includes dry tooling and/or mixed climbing.

5.2 The candidate should not be less than 18 years old at the time of assessment.

### 5.3 Pre training experience

- The candidate must have experience of leading multi-pitch ice climbs at grade WI III.
- The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number and type of climbs, areas, etc.).

### 5.4 Skills

The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:

1. On-sight lead efficiently
2. Select and place protection equipment including multi-point anchors
3. Rope management, knots, running belays, and belaying
4. Single, twin and double rope techniques
5. Route finding
6. Climbing movement skills
7. Basic coaching and teaching
8. Group management and leadership
9. Climbing calls
10. Abseiling
11. Emergency procedures
12. Avoiding and solving common problems
13. First aid

### 5.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Climbing equipment (e.g. ice tools, crampons, footwear, clothing, ice screws, belay devices and descenders, helmets, harness, ropes, slings, karabiners, protection equipment, etc.)
2. Care of equipment
3. Risk management, safety and emergency procedures
4. Dynamic safety system (e.g. impact forces, safety chain and fall factors).
5. Winter hazards.
6. Managing in the cold environment.
7. Prevention and treatment of cold injury and hypothermia.
8. Protection from solar radiation.
9. Ice types and formations
10. Ethics and tradition
11. Different climbing styles and techniques
12. Dry-tooling and mixed climbing
13. Route choice, grades and use of guidebooks

14. Environment and access
15. Nutrition
16. Physiology and injury prevention
17. Personal liability and insurance
18. Training

## 6. Alpine Climbing

6.1 The scheme must define the type of terrain that it applies to, and the type of terrain (if any) that is outside the scope of the qualification.

6.2 The candidate should not be less than 21 years old at the time of assessment.

### 6.3 Pre training experience

The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number and type of journeys and ascents, different areas, etc.). Candidates should be:

- Active alpine climbers with experience of ascents on snow, ice and rock.
- Able to lead UIAA Grade 4 alpine rock and 50° ice.
- Experienced in glacier travel.

### 6.4 Skills

The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:

1. Safe movement ascending, descending and traversing alpine terrain including:
  - Steep ground
  - Ridges
  - Gullies
  - Rock, ice and mixed steps
  - Glacier travel
  - Crevasse evacuation techniques
2. Use of ice axe and crampons
3. On-sight lead rock, ice and mixed ground efficiently
4. Select and place protection equipment including multi-point anchors
5. Rope management, knots, running belays, and belaying
6. Single, twin and double rope techniques
7. Route finding and navigation
8. Climbing movement skills
9. Basic coaching and teaching
10. Group management and leadership
11. Climbing calls
12. Abseiling
13. Emergency procedures
14. Avoiding and solving common problems
15. First aid

### 5.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Climbing equipment (e.g. ice tools, crampons, footwear, clothing, ice screws, belay devices and descenders, helmets, harness, ropes, slings, karabiners, protection equipment, etc.)
2. Care of equipment
3. Terrain and weather hazards
4. Risk management, safety and emergency procedures
5. Dynamic safety system (e.g. impact forces, safety chain and fall factors)
6. Prevention and treatment of cold injury and hypothermia
7. Protection from solar radiation
8. Ethics and tradition
9. Different climbing styles and techniques
10. Route choice, grades and use of guidebooks
11. Environment and access
12. Nutrition
13. Physiology and injury prevention
14. Personal liability and insurance
15. Training

## 7. Ski Mountaineering

This standard must be used in conjunction with the Avalanche Standard (section C).

- 7.1 The scheme must define the type of terrain that it applies to, and the type of terrain (if any) that is outside the scope of the qualification (e.g. if the scheme includes glacier terrain or not).
- 7.2 The candidate should not be less than 21 years old at the time of assessment.
- 6.3 Pre training experience  
The scheme must include a defined minimum of experience (e.g. years, number and type of tours and journeys, different areas, etc.). Candidates should be:
- Active ski mountaineers with experience of ascents, descents and multi-day tours.
  - Able to ski in control off-piste in difficult snow conditions.
  - Knowledgeable about safe glacier travel and alpine mountaineering techniques\*
- 6.4 Skills  
The scheme should test the candidates' ability to demonstrate effective personal techniques and ability in the following areas:
1. Good downhill skiing technique in a variety of off-piste snow conditions
  2. Good ascending technique on skins and crampons
  3. Risk awareness and risk reduction
  4. Route finding and navigation
  5. Glacier travel and crevasse evacuation\*
  6. Alpine mountaineering techniques\*
  7. Basic coaching and teaching
  8. Group management and leadership
  9. Emergency procedures
  10. Avoiding and solving common problems
  11. First aid

*\*If included in the scope of the scheme*

## 5.5 Knowledge

The scheme should test the candidates' knowledge about and their ability to give advice on the following:

1. Ski mountaineering equipment and clothing
2. Care of equipment
3. Terrain and weather hazards
4. Risk management, safety and emergency procedures
5. Prevention and treatment of cold injury and hypothermia
6. Protection from solar radiation
7. Traditions and ski mountaineering competitions
8. Route choice, grades and use of guidebooks
9. Environment and access
10. Nutrition
11. Physiology and injury prevention
12. Personal liability and insurance
13. Training

## **C. Additional Requirements**

The Additional Requirements are to be used where appropriate with the Activity Standards.

### **1. High Altitude**

The scheme must include experience, skills and knowledge about:

1. The process of acclimatisation
2. The symptoms and treatment for mountain sickness
3. Emergency procedures in the event of acute mountain sickness

### **2. Specific Regions**

The scheme must include experience, skills and knowledge about:

1. Special environmental considerations
2. Special environmental hazards
3. Survival techniques

### **3. Avalanche Terrain**

The scheme must include experience, skills and knowledge about:

1. Snow structure, avalanche types, terrain features and triggers
2. Avalanche information, observations and decision making
3. Rescue organisation, searching and emergency care

## Annexe

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